



THE SEASONS

BY
CHESTER ARTHUR ALLEN



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TO THE MEMORY OF
MY FATHER AND MOTHER
LEROY D. ALLEN
MARY BENAWA ALLEN

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THE SEASONS

THE SEASONS

SPRING

I

MARCH—SIGNS OF SPRING

The sun has been enroute his longer course
For many winter days. And often now
Apollo very late his daily ride
Begins. It looks as if he hesitates
In fear of being lost in mist and fog.
At times such dimness overhangs the day,
It seems this god must safe in dreamland be.
The changes come of snow, fine sleet, and rain,
And sunshine chasing frosty work: but still
A northern slope, or fence has fringe of snow;
And through the timber-land are scattered rows
Of green stove-wood all uniform in height.
The heaps of brush, the thickly sprinkled chips
And sawdust, barèd from their wintry bed
Are tokens bright the season has fulfilled
Its usual flow of snow-capped days. With cheer,
Anticipation overflows to star
Our timber friends. White-breasted nuthatch; jay;
The chickadee; and noisy flicker, breast

The Seasons

With crescent black; unwary creeper brown;
Our friendly robin; towhee on the ground;
And all the squirrels at play,—appear to look
Instinctively ahead, rejoicing all
The time, and often much impatience feel
That budding days should tarry, longing more
For leafy season, secret nooks to drink
And bathe, and summer's playground, woods and
field.

The changes blithe are spoken through the air.
A sprite awakens buds on sturdy limbs,
On twigs, the louder calls to seeds and roots
So snugly covered under ground, and throbs
Its welcome age-old vision—dawn of Spring.

II

PHILOSOPHY FROM NATURE

What way should forces, forged in mild or grand
Display of outer world affect the soul?
By whom controlled—the life and beauty shown
To thrill us with delight? What worthiness,
Significance have natural beauty, laws
Of nature? Read their meaning, find their worth
Through what we do with things about our sphere.
Since God controls with regularity
The change of seasons' rule, they govern bold.
And each one's disposition, sentiments
Expressed through laws whose regularity

Spring

Should teach us how, a justness all divine
Pervades the soul of earth, suggests a search
For many leading principles. For God
Is just, and justice triumphs everywhere.
All forms of energy should be to us
Like open books to teach a part of God.

III

MARCH STORM

Old Winter's age-long jealousy is roused
By threatening reign of "Boyhood of the year."¹
Incensed, when Spring is promising: a strong
West wind brings fleecy clouds at first, a mass
Of dark snow-laden ones then follow hard.
In fearless manner come the flurries first,
Like skirmishers of mighty armies, till
The falling storm is thick enough to hide
From view the objects near at hand. The snow
Is flung in piercing clouds of ev'ry shape,
Is formed in streams by blinding wind that picks
The fallen blanket, hurling it again.
With increased force it writhes in battle groups
With mighty foes. The moans and whistles heard
In tree tops, 'round the buildings, sound like cries
From wounded men, and trumpet call to charge.
It speeds along or slackens, sending down

¹Tennyson.

The Seasons

In mad uncertain rush, battalions close
In rank. Aeolus seems descending, bent
On endless fury. Smoth'ring plains which close
Together nestling seek protection. Proud
Are trees when swayed as ne'er before. The gale
Howls more as night draws near. When darkness
falls

The mind half dreams—the frozen hills are torn
From their foundations, ground to powder, hurled
Upon resistant world. Aquilo's troops
Now charge, now run, or circle round a hill
Or building, rush a flanking movement brave.
The struggles far and near, the drowsy hours
Impress like echoes, faint or clear. The ground
On western slopes is coldly bare. White gems
Are piled in masses great. Aeolus wroth
At failing to dislodge the hills, assailed
Direct, has heaped the flakes, endeavoring
To crowd the hillocks from eternal rest.
In rigid whiteness lies the Arctic field.
The brook is arched in self-protection, holds
A cavern roof of twining crystal form;
With deep-cut ripples ponds and lakes are spread
From shore to shore with sparkling handy frost.

IV

MARCH LANDSCAPES—FLOODED RIVER

The sprite of Spring is not with glaive o'ercome;

Spring

Is quick to send successive warmer days
Against oppressive rule. He turns the snow
To thousand rills which trickle down the hill
In last retreat to fill the swamps, and ponds,
Glad brooks and creeks to manifold their nat'ral
size;

Uncurtains green wheat mats, sward brown of last
Year's pasture, meadow, dark and yellow mud
That bristles stalks of corn and weeds. The net
Work water courses glen our land, enjoy
Their freedom, show that they are much alive
And quick to use the strength they have. A flood
Corralled in river channel foams stampede
In massive volume reaching upward, wroth
To wrestle with a bridge, resisting man's
Attempt to span its aged course. It pours
Along with icy hammers battering,
Or sweeps whatever man or Providence
May leave within its grasp, can spread upon
The bottom land a rising lake which swamps
The lowland hut, or levee breaks to free
Itself to roam its delta haunts of yore.

PHILOSOPHY

Our dial which sends through frigid space its rays
Will melt the crystals seven for rivulet;
The power driving rivers down their way,—
Should make us think of our Creator's will,
Awaken us to read a purpose—seen

The Seasons

To constantly reflect to mortal man,
"Lest we forget—lest we forget"¹ our God.

V

MAPLE-SUGAR SEASON

When only lines of soil-marked snow remain
In open field to show where glittering
Unfolded banks were shaped, the farmer with
His help will often wade in slush to tap
The sugar maple. Daily trips are made
With team on barrel sled, to gather sap,
For buckets must be kept from overflow.
The central interest is ever round
The camp. A glimpse of rising steam is sought,
For habit prompts to wondering, if all
Is well with fire and pans? There's something
fresh

With each returning trip—the fire rebuild,
The feeder fill, and skim the whitened pans
Of boiling, vapor-clouded sap which needs
A watching that increases ever while
It sweetens, thickens, darkens, nears the time
For syruping-off—the happy climax rounds
The day—extinguish partly fires, remove
With steady hand the pan to margin skid,
Well dip of hot transparent liquid joy,
Replace, refill, another round begins.
No grand repast is more enjoyed than meals

¹ Kipling.

Spring

At noon on peaceful days when gathered round
The big arch door—potatoes, eggs, both wrapped
In paper wet to roast in ashes hot,
To eat with sandwiches, hot coffee, sauce,
Warm doughnuts, corn bread, cookies, leeks, and
pie,

And syrup fresh. Such appetizing work
In opening Spring is filled with pleasures rare—
Review advance of "Boyhood of the year."
Each step is clearly seen and felt. From now
Until the snow returns the daily pulse
Of nature may be seen to measure change.

VI

APRIL

On sprightly days when southern slopes begin
To green, but sap continues fresh, the woods
Are filled with active merry life; the crows
Are heard in distance, one or sev'ral fly
Occasionally over tree tops near
And caw alarm; the piercing cry of hawks
Is often echoed through the timber; raps
Of woodpeckers in search of food sound loud
Tattoo for denizens of woods; above
The other chimes are scolding squirrels near,
Uneasy like the crow and jay. Combined
These voices waken muse for one who loves
The call of woodland life and beauty. Spring
Has conquered; earliest of flowers come.

The Seasons

The sugar season glides away, but leaves
One pleasant memories while watching day

SPRING PARADES IN TRIUMPH:
PHILOSOPHY

By day unfolding life of animals
And plants. We gather first hepatica,
Anemone; the adder's tongue precedes
The trillium and hosts of blossoms sweet
Which takes their colors matched from rainbow
base.

The wood is sprinkled quaint with flowers which
In silence greet returning summer birds,
And cheer on those migrating north, to keep
Them in a singing mood, that we may hear
Their songs. For in each song as in each bird
Is represented some idea clear

Of God, is some suggestion—How would He
Have us obey and think of Him? From Him,
His works, to look for inspirations clear,
From nature's moods—her tenderness, caress,
Her freshness, sympathy, and hopefulness—
Pursue the course which gives improvement most.
Discordant life, its pangs and vampire moods,
Ensnare so unaware, when nat'ral laws
Are disobeyed. Oh, look, and see what may
Be seen! For ev'ry positive has its
Deceitful negative. The soul should be
Made stronger by each opening of the year.

Spring

VII

APRIL—MARSH VOICES

The greetings, praise of early flowers, is joined
By aeon-practised welcome from the marsh.
When each day's warmth and sunshine freshens
grass

On southern slopes, this chorus comes in all
Its glory; swells out full and clear, fills out
With harmony the silent morning hours.
This frogling chorus all day long resounds
Continually over timbered hill
And dale; reëchoes o'er the rolling field.
When mirrored stars are spread around the rush,
The osier bush, the moor-grown tree, the bog,
The mossy stub, and moon-timed shadows pass
Across the still or roughened water roof
In clear dream-light that rovers love so well,
These silent hours are robbed of gloominess
By merry rounds of voices pealing forth
From lakes, and rivers, swamps, and meadow
ponds—
These praisers are the season's trumpeters.

VIII

EASTER

At Eastern service is retold in song,
In sermon, recitation—Christ is ours;

The Seasons

Has risen o'er the tomb; He died for us;
He lives for us; Redeemer who has set
His cross on high; defeated death; is now
The source of all our blessing, life and hope;
Forgives, consoles; our beacon light across
Dark waters. He reveals to us a law
Of life superior to death—set not
Aside, uncovers universal law.
Sanhedrin seal and Roman guards in vain,
Attempt to hide our light in rock-bound tomb.

PHILOSOPHY FROM EASTER

Unlocking charnel house has come to us
In northern clime when Spring unlocks the buds.
The reawakening, golden soul is close
Akin to reawakening nature—live!
Enjoy! oh, not exist! The empty crypt
At time of life reviving argues depth
Which well considered shows how Providence,
In striking grandest harmony, has played;
Phenomena returned, phenomena
Which sound the song of God's unchanging law.
For aeons Spring has come and gone, the globe
A sepulcher has been. The highest scale
Of life gets many visions clear of God's
Own heart. And ever when the Spring shall hang
Her smiles, reëchoing the chord upon
Forgetful man, may hope grow wise and sure.

Spring

IX

FISHING

Our friendly fisherman is seen around
The many lakes and streams as well as he
Who seldom prides himself to take the swift,
And scaly, slippery, staring wights away
From mirror home. The sportsman, toiler seeks
For swimmers that will make a fine repast.
If he must homeward turn without his luck,
He almost feels the day is sadly lost.

X

MAY, THE MONTH OF BLOSSOMS

The days are marked with fresh and sultry air.
Although our God through his estate has been
Most clearly speaking, opening secrets too;
He gives sublimity to us again
When many plants put forth in clusters, blooms
From every twig, whose beauty rivals claim
To charm when they were burdened downy bright
With fleecy cloud of winter's snow. Allured,
Approach the downy trees. A muffled sound,
A perfumed air will bring delight. Aglow
With springtide vision to discover joy
Anew and freshen old sensations, one
Is drawn within the influence of blooms
And their dependent army—honeybees,

The Seasons

And bumblebees found searching one by one
Each pollen cup. The blossoms swarm with life.
The journeys short of bumblebee are known
By buzzing loud. All o'er the trees in search
Of nectar, pebble-like black bodies near
At hand arrest attention most; both these
And speck-like ones a little farther off,—
Are darting back and forth a foot or more.
The hum continuous, companioned with
Aroma, sense of energy, and life
In spheres apart from man, awakens praise.

XI

WHEN THE LEAVES APPEAR

There comes again the royal garb of "God's
First temples"¹ casting shadows dense and deep
Like shades which fill the cave of bruin staunch.
The stock-browsed heavy timber which extends
Along the pasture field, is overlapped
With grass. Below the lower branches thick,
It's dark with many shelters. Climbing vines
And heavy foliage above a line
Of darkness, matched with sodded field, with hues
Of darker shades; combined with grandeur blue
Of cloud-patched sky,—the scene may rouse the
soul.

In entering the shade of nature's room
Of richest draperies, all curtained, screened

¹ Tennyson.

Spring

Beyond description, ev'ry bending twig
A hammock forms, and ev'ry leafy branch
Partition makes, one hears the voices, not
As called in naked woods, but mellowed score
By leafage dense which waves in Maia's breeze.
To walk along the banks where flowers had grown,
Were gathered near one's shadow; follow paths
And sap-boat roads,—and delve the question: What

PHILOSOPHY

Could build a service elevating more
Its influence? As God provides a time
For plants to grow, and yearly clothes the trees
With newborn leaves; then how much more should
man
Who has the privilege of choosing his
Activities, controlling his few thoughts,
Be sure that he is child of light and truth?
His newborn soul each natural object sees
As thought of God, a kindly plan divine.

XII

MAY LANDSCAPES

The various delightful emeralds
From fields where grow the darker wheat, the
grass

The Seasons

And rye of brighter stain, and oats with still
A lighter hue, the scatt'ring shade trees, all
Allied with timid changing forest shades,—
Are sharply cut from fields of gray, and black,
And orange soil where sprouts the maize. The
crow

And blackbird feast on corn destructive grubs.
The crow too often plucks the youngest shoots
To get the softened kernel—toll too great
For good it does. The dew a gladness brings
To farmer keen when he begins his work.
His heart throbs faster, cheered by sprightfulness
Of lambkins gamboling on morning sheen.
Shorn sheep may whiten lea where they have been
Since early dawn most busy feeding, lodged,
In heat of day they bleach the shade. The forms
Of lying, standing cattle, colored clear
From brindles, black, and white, and red, to those
Attired with all these colors on one coat,
Are seen in friendly cover out of sun;
The horses' arching forms lend grace to field
While hiding well from burning rays,—they too
As well as kine keep stamping, switching flies
Which flock of cowbirds, hopping now and then
On ground so near the stock, find easy fare.

HUSBANDRY OF GARDEN AND FOWLS

At farmer's home 'tis flood-tide time of year—
The garden full, big broods of chickens, ducks,

Spring

And geese, shy turkeys, guineas, pigs,—all
Attention, boast their hearty growing, smack

Of palatable dish on festive board
The Fourth, Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year's
Day,
And ev'ry favored dinner country round.

SUMMER

I

JUNE

"All green and fair the summer lies
Just budded from the bud of spring."¹
From early dawn to set of sun, the day

SONGS, NESTS

Is full of merry songs. When summer sound
Is all the sweeter, matched, securely set
In leafy branches, some may reach far out,
Protected well from sight above, below,
There nestles home within which soon will be
The greedy nestlings for two vigilant
And happy toilers. Insects, worms, fruit wild
Contribute strength to warm and grow our kin
In feathers. Morning after morning, while
The sun fast drinks the dew; and breezes sway
The limbs,—a chorus rings, not only sung
To nest so snug in ground, or bush, or tree
Top towering high, or dug in rotten stub,
To listeners in ev'ry place, while swift
And swallow twitter flitting through the sky.

¹ Susan Coolidge.

Summer

At night the silence—broken near and far
By rustling leaves, the voice of owl, or train,
And tread of creatures doubly fond of shade
Of earth—is passèd under guardian wings.
When days are hot and dusty, breezes cool
Will rock these cradles, hammocks made for wild.

II

CHILDREN'S DAY

On Children's Day, the boys and girls amid
The garlands, mottoes, palms, bouquets, and large
White lilies, sit in groups arranged for proud
Occasion—faces bright, and flowers bright.
All decorations prove but symbols small,
Of interest for which the day is kept.
What pride and pleasure swells the heart to hear
The smaller ones take part in praises for
Ideals of merit? Hark the shortest song,
Or recitation, follow longer ones
Of juniors, seniors, choir, or any part
The day commands, the int'rest never stops.
And oft' a wee one never heard before,
Will bring the most delight. Parental joy
The deepest goes to see the yearly growth
That blooms, so quickly measured Children's Day.

The Seasons

III

PICNIC

The river bank, or lake, or ocean front,
And silent forest tenderly invite
All toilers come and find agreeable
Excitement, pleasures yield to noble end,
Relax, the cobwebs clear away, expand
The chest, electrify the nerves, refine
The senses, share your joys with souls of truth.
To picnic-makers laughing water breaks
To dimples, openly reveals, pours out
"A song of a vast unrest,"¹ repeats, approves
Of pleasures, shares enjoyments worthy, gives
To body, mind, and soul a vigor, depth,
And nobleness preparative to live
A grand and noble life. New friends and old
Meet happily to talk. The frolic, feast
Of day, with group and team matched games will
help
To make of business pleasure, show that joys
Aright will always breathe the choicest pearls.

IV

BATHING

The quiet pool seems always welcome gleam
To happy bathers, linger, splash, and dive,

¹ William Hayne, in "A Sea Lyric."

Summer

To let the peace of scene pass into soul—
Its meeting nature, boon companion meets
Companion. Watch, take part in play, and it
Will fill the heart with joy of summer day.

V

QUEEN OF THE YEAR

All ranks of plants from trees, and clover thick,
Obnoxious weeds have blossoms sipped of dew
And richest nectar. Blackbird, meadow-lark,
And robin, grackle, sparrow, other friends,
In legions, many species brooding bliss.
On pleasant mornings oriole, which weaves
A hanging nest, will call from hidden perch
In thick leaved trees about the lawn and sward.
The luscious strawberry will introduce
The fruits and vegetables seasonable.
A June-bug wings his way as well on dark
As on a moon-lit night. The freshened air,
The heavy leaves, the fragrant flowers, sky
Of rose and purple, call of whippoorwill,
With evening stars, make perfect twilight hours
Which sound in tune with daylight's golden chain.

VI

STORM

The diverse scenes of opening summer show
How God is roused to clothe the naked earth.

The Seasons

Succeeding balms of sunbeams, zephyrs, mists,
Are blessings easily attributed
To God, but God is ev'rywhere. Detect
A coming storm by heavy colors seen
To rise above the distant line of earth
And sky. A gale begins while overhead
A mass of floating monarchs, outlined dark
Against the lighter vapor, sail on.
Thin clouds of dust are ever being raised
From sun-burned road, and field of clover dry,
Until the air appears smoke-laden. Like
The waves of sea, the standing wheat and hay,
Is dipping, swelling, lightens, darkens. Trees
With branches wincing wild from blast turn shades
Of lighter green. The flashes come in chains
Against the mountain background, followed soon
By cannonading guns of siege. A space
Of gray, of even width extends above
Horizon, climbs in darker sky, and just
Before arriving, heralds itself by gust
Of stronger temper. Giant drops at first
Come single handed, followed close by host
Of streams that splash and dash, and grow in force
Until with summer's courage ranks are filled.
If toiler's prayers are answered, fields have rime,
Awakened souls that clothe the soil with cheer.

Summer

VII

JULY—HARVEST

These changing thrilling acts so full of wealth
Continue. Clover blossoms fragrantly
Will call the mower, hay-rake. Nodding grain
Deprived of fragrant mead, a lighter shade
Will turn, anticipating harvest hot,
Until inviting golden field it stands.
The blackbird, robin, jay make frequent trips
To crimson cherry trees as long as crop
Will last; then other songsters aid to take
Their own from raspberry, the elder bush,
The blackberry, as each one ripens. Fruit
And grasshoppers with sip from bubbling spring
Are turned to merry songs. A burning sun
May hasten harvest. Clatter hardly ends
Of gliding swath machine before the hum
Of binder starts. The golden wheat a last
Salute will wave to neighbor field of oats
As yet untouched by age. A week or two
Of glowing days, however, changes them
To harvest color. Soon they too will fall
Before the reaper, graceful, bow adieu
To stalwart corn intensely growing ears.
The heavy maize is dark as waves of sea,
And truly crest with downy tassels bright.

The Seasons

VIII

GROWING TIME

Cerulean the sky brings ardent rays
Which beat and linger, fill our atmosphere
With throbbing fervid waves of life which warm
To zealous work the apple, plum, and peach,
The walnut, beech, the hickory, and oak.
The pumpkin, squash, and watermelon vines
Are spreading wide to raise delicious fruits.
A throng of our herbaceous friends have come
And gone, but leave as hostage apt return,
Reflective thoughts, that each year brings to us
Their happy season. Faydom sturdy grove
And forest where the wood-thrush merry sings
As clear as if 'twas sung by nymph herself.

RAIN

Bland wit of Thor oft aids activity,
Pervades the world of growing plants, outwits
The harbinger of fall whose gelid breath
Has often come so fatally upon
This kingdom unaware. The apples first
To ripen bring enjoyment fond, but when
Varieties are many, juicy foods
Are deftly made, surpassing Eve's repast
In garden where first labored thinking man.

Summer

IX

AUGUST, THE MONTH OF WILD-LIFE VOICES

Displeasing, noisy locust warns of drought
In heat of day. The red-winged blackbird finds
The heavy ripening maize. As sun goes down
They noisily will gather round the swamp
Elm, willow, alder bush—here seek a night's
Repose. We do not lack for company
When earth's dark mantle spreads, for cricket
fluts

Its metered cheer quite ready; katydid
Tones o'er and under, rapid jazzy forte
That leads the midnight summer symphony.
Serenest wild-life serenade of year
Is versed throughout the pleasing slumber hours.

X

AUGUST LANDSCAPES

The brassy oatfield stubble turns to rolls
Of dusty ground. And desert-like the mead
And pasture look beside the restful woods.
Refreshed the "thirsty ground"¹ regains its hue
Original. The garden well fulfills
Its promise. Orchards, vineyards welcome give
In loads of their own prize deliciousness.

¹Tennyson.

AUTUMN

I

SEPTEMBER LANDSCAPES

When eye of heaven shortens arc until
The larking time for owl, and bats, or coon,
And undisturbed south flight of water fowl
Is equal-houred to Phoebus' rule supreme,
The friendly heat in moving south, new life
In other spheres to waken, opens way
For frosty nights. The maize shocks increase each
Fair day. The young wheat daily grows. At last
In unresisting calm which stars or moon
Are left to watch, a frozen vapor creeps
Upon the earth as through an open door.
This fairy painting whitens over fields,
The fences, trees, and roofs, and all the things
Exposed, until their speciousness confirms
The thought, 'tis star dust, star dust sprinkled here.

If light or heavy frost, do gems above
Grow less in luster nymph's when flowering comes?
The sun keeps ever bright, itself to plate
With sparkling down the elfs had spread to play
Upon, and swift returns to paint the leaves
Its choicest shades of orange, red, and brown.
The tresses frisk of bushes, trees in groups
Or trees alone, and forest stand aglow.

Autumn

When matched with fields of green, the cloud-
patched sky,
And cornfields bristling shocks or stalks, present
A many colored landscape scene which basks
In smiles of autumn sun. If sought and grasped
For love of its suggestions deep, the spell
Of peace, contentment, whither it be found,
To heart communing nature kindles quick.

II

OCTOBER LANDSCAPES

On sunny days, the horizon near and far
Is partly lined with timber, partly lined
With rolling fields. All distant colors blend,
Obscured by veil of hazy film. The green
And barren ground is intermingled craft
With unscreened gray of upper trunks and limbs
In near-by wood contrast with orange, red,
And brown of what few leaves remain to form
The variegated patches, thicker hung
In lower half of ever cheering woods.
The smoky dawn and varied flame-cloud east
Of dreamy days that end in flame-patched west
And twilight haze, are interrupted now
And then, in warning season's close, by heralds
Of rain, and wind that pick the leaves which have
Not fallen, nor been coaxed to whirl, or sail,
Or dart away in playful breeze. In banks

The Seasons

The summer verdure, glory piled by wind,
Profusely carpets, weaves autumnal pride
On floor of timber land, in shades which vie
With pledge when rainbow arches full.

III

PHILOSOPHY FROM NATURE

Although the autumn bravely paints upon
The sky her fame, 'tis gorgeous all the year:
Kaleidoscopic aspect greetings speak
Of Deity to minds intelligent.
The hours of changing clouds have eloquence
That matches man, a tenderness so full
Of spiritual—moving art divine.
And when the hours of deep blue canopy
Are spread, sublimity of cloudless sky
So pure and beautiful, has always shown
That God alone in heavens may be seen.
Another herald wishing Maker's praise,
Is voice of thunder which is echoed cloud
To cloud in rumble. Why o'erlook so great
A part? For God is teaching many ways.

Autumn

IV

FOREST IN NOVEMBER

When trees are foliage stript for winter blasts,
And cleaned of shack by squirrels, they remain
In drowsy silence—show their sturdy arms.
The pine with all its emerald is fresh
And cosy; cedar, spruce, and hemlock keep
Their aquamarine, and also house within
Their deepest many denizens of wild;
For here much more than found in naked woods
The gales of winter barrèd out, with hint
Of southern home from thicket evergreen,
Where spiral stairways, frequent landings, aisles
Profoundly winding, zigzag vestibules
Incite to rooms of sundry size and shape
Antiquely columned. Thatching thicker grows,
The lower lines are traced from towering tops.

WINTER

I

DECEMBER SNOWSTORM

A chilling rain to hail and sleet may change
And then entirely snow with large light flakes
That gently fall, or sail, or balance well
As if they fear of getting camping place
Of ranking crystals, vigils o'er the host.
But other flocks appear to hesitate
In study mood, deciding whether they
Shall rest upon the naked bows, or limbs
Of evergreen, upon a roof, or fence,
Or weed, or log, or light upon the ground.
This mantle pale comes stealthily as creep
Of rising tide. All objects seen from sky
Must don their sagely ermine. Providence
Provides the blanket down protecting plants
That slumber o'er the ground. Impartially
The branches loaded, bending 'neath the bright
Cold burden, look as though their foliage
Developed into sparkling silver foam
That more than covers, piles, and hangs from twigs.
When clouds are shorn of fleecy treasures, moon
Looks cold and night is still, but lighted clear
By friendly orb to almost perfect day.

Winter

The country lies with ev'ry hill and vale
Enrobed before the space of universe:
Its pearly white contrasts with twinkling ink
Dome sky. With dawn of day, comes breeze that
 shakes
The trees of splendor; crystals drop, appear
In sunlight, like a storm of falling stars.

DECEMBER LANDSCAPE

When sleigh bells answer sleigh bells tuned with
 heart
And head, the air is pure and bracing o'er
The welcome snow which flows dark-timbered-
 lined
Along the hills and dales horizonward.
When good will honored true, the fellowship,
And joy, and happiness the warmer grow
In social uplift, making memories
To prize forever, prized for wholesomeness
Of festive hall, or round the open grate.

CHRISTMAS

The piercing air our minds with keener thoughts
Will fill to meditate on life and death.
The harp within the soul is turned anew
With charity, and youth returns and glows
With memories of laurestine and pine,
Or cedar hung with friendly gifts and jokes.
The stockings hung by chimney, bulge from toe

The Seasons

Full length, are unpacked. All the world seems
new
To boys, and girls, as well as Santa Claus.

II

PHILOSOPHY FROM CHRISTMAS

The chances come to prove our heav'nly thought
And register appreciation full
Of humble birth announced by angel hosts
To wisemen, shepherds, nineteen centuries past.
He gave to mankind highest order, apt
For thinking out of all relations—Truth
And Mercy meet, and Righteousness and Peace
Have kissed each other. This reject, the world
An unexplained riddle stands; believe
And well explained will stand the history
Of race. He saw the germ of good in soul,
The heaven which will raise a kingdom known
Of God throughout the world. This course be-
comes
A part of one by growth of daily deeds.

III

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS IS SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY

A thousand chances come to show divine
Our kinship through appreciation deep

Of nat'ral beauty poured around the earth
At dawn to make impressive pictured world,
Too quickly taken up by setting sun.
Our royal blood is manifested sound
By kindly feeling toward God's creatures all.
With pride the heart does beat to view the path
The mighty English race has trod in search
Of liberty, and law. Continuous
Beyond the power of king to chain, or crush,
Has risen noble scorn of tyrant pride.
Our race success, shows social smiling kind,
With kindness, sternness blending character;
A land of deputized Democracy;
A land of patriots where justice lights
The public soul, and shines from every home.

SPirit OF DEMOCRACY

Our heroes wisely guard the nation's weal:
Our statesmen voice a free Democracy.
May tyrants ever tremble when they read
How England, France, Italia, Japan,
America, the whole entente fought
To make the world a safe Democracy!
Enlightened people strongly sympathize
With Belgium, Serbia, All-helpless-lands
Who suffered Hun-crushed years in great world
war.
The sons of Freedom have subdued for aye
The blighting German strength. With haughtiness

The Seasons

But harmless rank, exposed, autocracy
Has fallen. Spite must drop, forever drop
Among the civil nations. Brother-love
And honor, noble wishes fitly crown
The deeds of men who have so much to bear,
To live for. Hate, revenge a loss have been.
The world should never be without its league
For government of free Democracy.

IV

THE PURPOSE OF DEMOCRACY

America's collective action marks
Her chivalry, disinterestedness,
Her charity, unselfish inborn mind.
The purpose thrives, Democracy will make
Each age much better than the last; to build
On justice, good that will forever stand;
To front autocracy and not to yield;
For present likeness shapes the future near
And far. All national aspirations which
Are free from elements of discord have
A worthy claim; Eternal Peace must stand
On Rock of Freedom—always hard won prize.

MARSHAL FOCH

How lofty-minded, Marshal Foch to end
The war without the sacrifice of one

Winter

Unneeded life! How kindly-earnest not
To add one hour of anguish to the world!
The world will always be in debt to France
For this true brave and patient son who did
Accept responsibility to meet
The greatest foe Democracy has faced.

AMERICA'S LIGHT

Far-visioned Wilson represents the light
America has sent across the sea;
His principles a Magna Charta raise
For mankind. Liberty, equality,
Fraternity were first proclaimed to world
In seventeen-seventy-six. American
Unfolding creeds are near to nature's life;
Her mighty leaders spring from noble hearts.

Washington the father of his country:
Lincoln the savior of his nation:
Wilson the league of nations statesman:

The shepherds for our race. How Wilson led
America to Freedom's rescue, helped
To purge the world of aristocracy!
Emplants Democracy's nobility—
The first Democracy world-citizen—
This sacred liberty unshackled lives.

The Seasons

V

JANUARY—NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS

The New Year opening page is closing day
Of holiday season. Resolutions good
And turning new leaves annually are quite
The fashion—if, with each occasion grow
The stronger reasons, sometime they may hold.
A purple cloud that hangs from high in east
Obscures many sunrise; vapor-veil
Transparent, dims the darkest forest line
And tints in gray the shade of ev'ry hue.
The hand of winter never overlooks
A crevice; flings Siberian landscape fell.
The field is marked gracefully by road,
Or path, or lone footprints of man or beast,
Which wind across the sea of snow. The snow
In sun, reflects a blinding pearly light;
Is fleecy cloud which snugly lays o'er hill
And vale. When wind runs strong, the outlined
clouds
Of light or freshly fallen ermine whirl
Around the buildings, fences, trees, and posts,
About all objects rooted firm in snow,
Or sweep across the open, bounding fringe
From knolls, and terraced hillsides large and small,
Behind which streaming banks are formed whose
shape
And depth afforded cover molds by hand
Of tireless gale. The sun which often sets

Winter

Behind a purple long-horizon cloud,
Bespeaks the lengthening day. On frosty days
Designs fantastic, ferns, of net-veined leaves,
Of puzzle pictures, decorate in full
Or part the window pane. How warm is coat
Of fur or feathers, age-long denizens
The climate knows! To clothe himself, to make
His dwelling, pristine man, the animals
Has sought which nature clothes the warmest—
 clothed
As if to keep the season's company.

HOW DIFFERENT MODERN MAN

What change in building feels the modern man?
How different enlightened home, where trust
And love in personality is felt;
Where kin are taught that social atmosphere
Should grow to make a brighter home; where care
And diligence in foresight rare is used
To teach respect for things of worth, and warn
Against degrading life which plays among
The lower scale of mankind, lead the way
Developing the good will spirit, choose
Coöperation, voiced with helpful end
In view—to conquer self; arises here
In ev'ry one the memories to more
And more endear the comforts, pleasures, life
In keeping faith with home-born happiness.
Have games true sportsmanship to plant and thrive;

The Seasons

Awaken healthy thought, tell stories live;
Survey a broader reading interest,
Of any wholesome thought pursued the hours
Of long uninterrupted evenings.

VI

FEBRUARY

How welcome peers the final period
Of snow, which early brings the day of clouds
Or prophet's shadow, numbering the weeks

INDICATIONS OF THE WINTER CLOSING

Before the season's change! The lengthening days
Give promise, dreams of blossoms under snow,
And active time again for animals
And plants. The friendly snowbirds have their
 broods,
Await to follow path of frigid grip.
In social circles, haste is made the snow
Enjoy as long as possible. This month
Occur the birthdays honored far and wide,
Of Lincoln, Washington; occurs the day
Of heart of hearts, St. Valentine's; it adds
The leap-year genial stunts, a year in four.
The picturesqueness, length'ning days of bleak
Old January glide, succeeding month
Which stalks the stormiest, most changeable
Of year. Such frequent storms must indicate
Old Winter's stern unwillingness to yield

Winter

The season's rule; in anger, blows his breath
The fiercer after sunny periods
Of constantly increasing daylight hours;
He piles the snow in curling banks, as though
To thwart as long as possible the Spring
From waking insects, flowers, grass, and buds.
Reluctantly Old Winter see his grip
Upon the season, loosen—augurs change.

CONCLUSION

The cycle tale of year's environment
With myriads of observation points,
With all discoveries, and weaving fast
From their interpretation threads, must prove
That only squared for benefit of man,
To aid him in his upward-onward march,—
Omnipotence has placed within our reach
These blessings—honest work. All progress,
truth,
Morality, and industry go hand
In hand. Achievement, all that man holds dear,
Is what improves his living through the whole
Of his activity and interest.
What golden growth in life of Christ! How rich
To have the priceless visions seeing God
In all creation—glow of wealthy sun,
In garden sweet, or hive of honey, stars
Of night, in fountain, brook or rose, in green
Of hills, the height of mountain, majesty
Of ocean, boundless sky, in peace of woods,

The Seasons

Or song of bird, in beauty crowning world
Anew each day, in life of Christian man
Or woman, better still, enshrined in hearts
Of Christian home. May man be guided through
 Suggestions from the vivid pictured world,
 Suggestions from the wondrous energies,
 Suggestions from the free Democracy:

Accept this Heav'nly Message bringing news
Of glory toward God, of peace on earth
That leads to know the worth of good will strong;
Of tidings good, of joy profound to all
The nations wisely building heart and home.



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